

FISH and WILDLIFE COMMISSION AGENDA ITEM COVER SHEET

Meeting Date: June 14, 2018

Agenda Item: Blacktail Meadows Fishing Access Site Proposed Easement (R3)

Division: Fisheries

Action Needed: Final

Time Needed on Agenda for this Presentation: 5 Minutes

Background:

Blacktail Meadows Fishing Access Site (FAS) is located on the outskirts of Dillon, adjacent to the north exit of Interstate-15. The 14 -acre site was donated to the Department in May of 2002 by the Swenson family. It was subsequently developed as a family fishing pond. The 14-acre site is bisected by Swenson Lane which is a paved thoroughfare providing access to local homes and businesses. The fishing pond is located on the north side of the road and Blacktail Creek is on the south side. The fishing pond was created when the gravel pit used for construction of Swenson Lane filled with water. The property is currently bordered by the interstate exchange, the YMCA and a scrap metal recycling yard.

The Department evaluated a request to provide a road easement through the south side of the FAS in exchange for fee title to a parcel of adjoining property encompassing both sides of Blacktail Creek. FWP would gain approximately 1.15-acres of land that includes 465 additional lineal ft. of Blacktail Creek frontage. In exchange, FWP would grant a road easement encompassing roughly .26-acre of land.

Public Involvement Process & Results:

The draft EA was circulated for public comment from March 23 through April 23, 2018, to 58 interested agencies, groups and persons. The EA was also posted on the Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks website. A total of 10 comments were received, all in support of the proposed action.

Alternatives and Analysis:

The proposed action will provide permanent public access to a privately-owned portion of Blacktail Meadows FAS that has been used by the public since the site was first donated to FWP in 2002. It will also protect this portion of the stream from potential future development. If the Commission chooses not to approve the proposed action, the landowner could block access to the creek and subsequently develop this area for private enterprise.

Agency Recommendation & Rationale:

FWP recommends that the Commission approve the proposed action that would provide permanent public access to both sides of Blacktail Creek for fishing as well as protect the property from future development.

Proposed Motion:

I move that the Commission approve FWP's request to provide a road easement at Blacktail Meadows FAS in exchange for fee title to approximately 1.15-acres of land encompassing 465 ft. of Blacktail Creek frontage.